



Posted on Thu, Oct. 28, 2004

Google acquires map maker Keyhole

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) - Google Inc. has bought digital map maker Keyhole Corp., continuing the online search engine leader's efforts to broaden its horizons in the face of tougher competition.

The deal, announced Wednesday, expands the toolbox that Mountain View-based Google is assembling to catalog almost everything in the world.

Keyhole, also based in Mountain View, uses powerful 3-D technology to provide faraway or close-up views of a region, neighborhood or specific address. The images, which rely on shots taken from satellites and airplanes, can be tilted into different positions. Keyhole gets the images from a variety of sources, including Colorado providers, DigitalGlobe and Space Imaging.

"We like the way the Keyhole folks think, and can't wait to get under the hood to see how this service might assist Google users around the world in finding the information they need," Jonathan Rosenberg, Google's vice president of product development, wrote in a note posted Wednesday on Google's Web site.

Google didn't disclose how much it paid for privately held Keyhole, which has 29 employees. All those workers have joined Google, said John Hanke, Keyhole's chief executive.

In its first move, Google lowered the price for Keyhole's basic consumer software from \$69.95 to \$29.95 -- a 57 percent savings. Company officials declined to discuss Google's long-term plans for Keyhole. A more sophisticated "professional" version of Keyhole costs \$599.

Founded in 2001, Keyhole received its initial financing from Sony Broadband and then raised additional money last year from In-Q-Tel, a venture capital firm backed by the CIA. Keyhole's roughly 10,000 customers include a cross-section of government agencies.

Although the company isn't well known, Keyhole's technology received widespread attention during the early days of the Iraq war when CNN used the 3-D maps to zero in on the battlefield.

"This technology is much more than just Mapquest on steroids," said Caris & Co. analyst David Garrity, referring to one of the Internet's most popular sites for directions.

Google has been introducing an assortment of new products this year while also diversifying through a series of acquisitions.

With the expansion, Google hopes to make its Web site an even more popular destination, helping to boost its advertising revenue -- the company's main source of profits. Google also is muscling up to fend off competitive threats from Yahoo Inc. and Microsoft Corp.

The other products recently introduced by Google include a free e-mail service that offers 1,000 megabytes of storage and a free software program that indexes and searches a variety of content stored on computer hard drives. Google also recently acquired a Picasa Inc., a service that helps manage digital photos.

Despite all the additional bells and whistles, Google CEO Eric Schmidt told analysts last week that the company isn't trying to transform its popular search engine morph into an all-purpose Web site, commonly known as a "portal," along the lines of Yahoo, Microsoft's MSN and AOL.

Investors have been impressed with Google's strategy so far. The company's shares gained \$4.17 Wednesday to close at 185.97 on the Nasdaq Stock Market.

Keyhole bought by Google for 3D mapping

28 October 04

Moving ever closer to its dream of being able to catalogue almost everything in the world, Google Inc. has just bought digital map-maker, Keyhole Corp.

Google had already recently acquired Picasa, a service that helps manage digital photos, but Keyhole is the first it has acquired since its August initial public offering. All of Keyhole's 29 employees have joined Google, and its current customer base of about 10,000 come mainly from a coterie of government agencies.

Claiming to be the largest 3D, commercial imagery depository online, Keyhole, founded in 2001, maintains a multi-terabyte database of digital images of geographic locations captured from satellites and aeroplanes. Its 3-D technology provides far-away or close-up views of a region, neighbourhood or specific address. Images can be tilted into different positions, and its image resolution in some areas is as fine as half a foot. We previously saw Keyhole's 3-D maps being used to zero in on the battlefield on CNN news during the early days of the Iraq war.

Keyhole received its initial financing from Sony Broadband but then raised additional money last year from In-Q-Tel, a venture capital company backed, interestingly, by the CIA.

The Keyhole database includes thousands of cities, and images varying in age from two months to three years. It gets these images from a variety of sources, including the private Colorado satellite companies DigitalGlobe and Space Imaging, while some lower-resolution images come from the U.S. government.

One of the first things Google did after the buyout, was slash the price of Keyhole 2 LT, the basic consumer downloadable software by a whooping 57%, reducing it from \$70 (~£38) to \$30 (~£16). The more sophisticated Keyhole 2 Pro is priced at \$599 (~£327).

Yahoo and MSN already provide online mapping services, enabling users to zoom down to street-level scale, while Mapquest is a popular and established site for directions. Now Google users will no longer have to leave the Google site to avail of this type of service.

We wait with bated breath to see the uses Google put it to.

Keyhole
Google

This article comes from www.digital-lifestyles.info

The logo for Directions magazine features the word "Directions" in a large, stylized, lowercase font with a drop shadow, and "magazine" in a smaller, lowercase font below it. To the right is a search bar with a magnifying glass icon and the word "Search". Below the main header are several menu links: "Your GIS News Source", "HOME", "SUBSCRIBE", "ARTICLES", "INDUSTRY", "RESOURCES", and "DIRECTORIES".

What if René Descartes had gone EXTREME?

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Google Acquires Keyhole Corp. October 27, 2004

Company: Keyhole Corporation

Location: Mountain View, CA, United States of America

A large, stylized, lowercase "Google" logo.

MOUNTAIN VIEW, Calif. -- Google Inc. (Nasdaq:GOOG) today announced it acquired Keyhole Corp., a Mountain View, Calif.-based digital mapping company.

Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed.

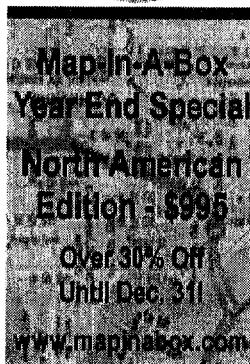
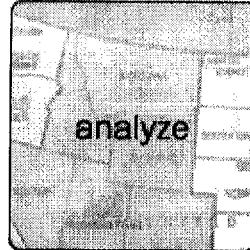
"With Keyhole, you can fly like a superhero from your computer at home to a street corner somewhere else in the world -- or find a local hospital, map a road trip or measure the distance between two points," said Jonathan Rosenberg, vice president, Product Management. "This acquisition gives Google users a powerful new search tool, enabling users to view 3D images of any place on earth as well as tap a rich database of roads, businesses and many other points of interest. Keyhole is a valuable addition to Google's efforts to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful."

With an Internet connection, users enter an address or other location information and Keyhole's software accesses the database and takes them to a digital image of that location on their computer screen. The interactive software then gives users many options, including the ability to zoom in from space-level to street-level, tilt and rotate the view or search for other information such as hotels, parks, ATMs or subways. Unlike traditional mapping technologies, Keyhole creates a dynamic 3D interface for geographic information.

Keyhole's technology combines a multi-terabyte database of mapping information and images collected from satellites and airplanes with easy-to-use software.

Google also announced, effective immediately, a price reduction for Keyhole 2 LT from \$69.95 to \$29.95.

Keyhole was founded in 2001. Keyhole customers include consumers, large



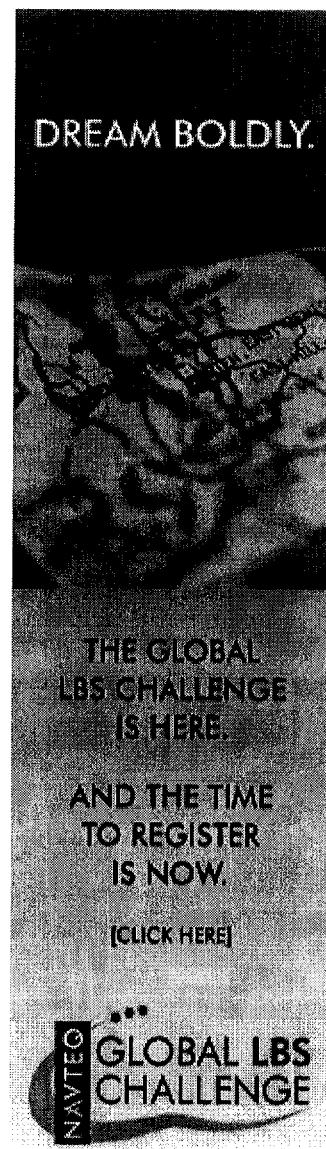
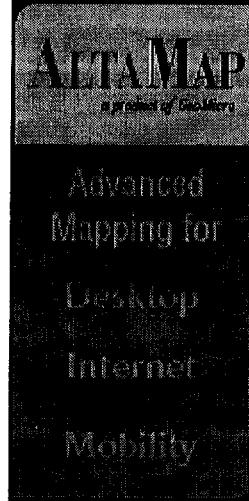
and small businesses and public agencies. Current Keyhole users will benefit from the expanded resources and operational scale made possible by the integration into Google. Their service will continue uninterrupted.

For a free, seven-day trial of Keyhole, please go to www.keyhole.com.

About Google Inc.

Google's innovative search technologies connect millions of people around the world with information every day. Founded in 1998 by Stanford Ph.D. students Larry Page and Sergey Brin, Google today is a top web property in all major global markets. Google's targeted advertising program, which is the largest and fastest growing in the industry, provides businesses of all sizes with measurable results, while enhancing the overall web experience for users. Google is headquartered in Silicon Valley with offices throughout North America, Europe, and Asia. For more information, visit www.google.com.

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